

Informational Sheet “D”
Habitat Description for Federally Listed Threatened,
Endangered, and Proposed Species in Iowa
(use by local government recipients)

The following paragraphs are the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service standard paragraphs describing the status, counties of known occurrence, and potential or historical records, as well as habitat for listed species in Iowa.

1. The endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) is known to occur in Appanoose, Clarke, Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Henry, Jasper, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lee, Louisa, Lucas, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Monroe, Muscatine, Ringgold, Union, Van Buren, Wapello, Warren, Washington, and Wayne or portions of these Counties south of Interstate 80. It could potentially occur in counties of Adair, Adams, Audubon, Cass, Cedar, Dallas, Fremont, Guthrie, Harrison, Iowa, Johnson, Mills, Montgomery, Page, Polk, Pottawattamie, Poweshiek, Scott, and Taylor.

During the summer, the Indiana bat frequents the corridors of small streams with well developed riparian woods as well as mature upland forests. It forages for insects along the stream corridor, within the canopy of floodplain and upland forests, over clearings with early successional vegetation (old fields), along the borders of croplands, along wooded fencerows, and over farm ponds and in pastures. It has been shown that the foraging range for the bats varies by season, age and sex and ranges up to 81 acres (33ha). It roosts and rears its young beneath the loose bark of large dead or dying trees. It winters in caves and abandoned mines.

An Indiana bat maternity colony typically consists of a primary roost tree and several alternate roost trees. The use of a particular tree appears to be influenced by weather conditions (temperature and precipitation). For example, dead trees found in more open situations were utilized more often during cooler or drier days while interior live and dead trees were selected during periods of high temperature and/or precipitation. It has been shown that pregnant and neonatal bats do not thermo regulate well and the selection of the roost tree with the appropriate microclimate may be a matter of their survival. The primary roost tree, however, appears to be utilized on all days and during all weather conditions by at least some bats. Indiana bats tend to be philopatric, i.e. they return to the same roosting area year after year.

Suitable summer habitat in Iowa and Illinois is considered to have the following characteristics within a 1/2 mile radius of the project site:

- a) forest cover of 15 % or greater;
- b) permanent water;
- c) one or more of the following tree species 11 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) or greater: shagbark and shellbark hickory that may be dead or alive, and dead bittemut hickory, American elm, slippery elm, eastern cottonwood, silver maple, white oak, red oak, post oak, and shingle oak with slabs or plates of loose bark;
- d) at least 1 potential roost tree per 2.5 acres;
- e) potential roost trees must have greater than 10% coverage of loose bark (by visual estimation of peeling bark on trunks and main limbs).

If the project site contains any habitat that fits the above description, it may be necessary to conduct a survey to determine whether the bat is present. If Indiana bats are known to be present, they must not be harmed, harassed or disturbed when present. [for small tree clearing projects ...] Check with your local DNR office to see when Indiana bat habitat may be altered (i.e. trees cleared).

2. The endangered peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is listed as breeding in Polk (Des Moines) and Linn (Cedar Rapids), Counties in Iowa. Potential breeding may also occur in Rock Island County, Illinois/Scott County, Iowa (Quad Cities) and Muscatine County (Muscatine) based upon previous nesting attempts. Historical records include breeding in Allamakee, Black Hawk, Clayton, Dubuque, Johnson, Muscatine, and Wayne Counties in Iowa. It may be observed anywhere in the two states as an occasional visitor, particularly along the Mississippi River during migrational periods.

3. Bald eagle (breeding grounds). The threatened eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is listed as breeding in the following counties in Iowa: Allamakee, Black Hawk, Clayton, Dubuque, Fremont, Iowa, Jackson, Jefferson, Howard, Linn, Lucas, Washington and Winneshiek. Potentially, it may also be found to breed in Benton, Delaware, Jones, Mahaska, Marion, Sac and Webster Counties.

3a. **Bald eagle (wintering grounds).** It is also listed as wintering along large rivers, lakes and reservoirs in the following Iowa counties: Allamakee, Appanoose, Clayton, Clinton, Des Moines, Dubuque, Fremont, Hardin, Harrison, Johnson, Lee, Linn, Louisa, Mahaska, Marion, Monona, Muscatine, Polk, Pottawattamie, Scott, Van Buren, Wapello, and Woodbury.

During the winter, this species feeds on fish in the open water areas created by dam tailwaters, the warm water effluents of power plants and municipal and industrial discharges, or in power plant cooling ponds. The more severe the winter, the greater the ice coverage and the more concentrated the eagles become. They roost at night in groups in large trees adjacent to the river in areas that are protected from the harsh winter elements. They perch in large shoreline trees to rest or feed on fish. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. The eagle may not be harassed, harmed or disturbed when present nor may nest trees be cleared.

4. **The least tern** (*Sterna antillarum*) is listed as endangered in Pottawattamie and Woodbury Counties, Iowa (along the Missouri River). In addition, the following counties are considered to be potential habitat: Fremont, Harrison, Lyon, Plymouth, Polk, and Sioux Counties in Iowa. It nests on bare alluvial or dredged spoil islands and sand/gravel bars in or adjacent to rivers, lakes, gravel pits and cooling ponds. It nests in colonies with other least terns and sometimes with the piping plover. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. It must not be harmed, harassed or disturbed when present.

5. **The piping plover** (*Charadrius melodus*) is listed as threatened in Iowa where it nests on sandy beaches, bare alluvial and dredged spoil islands adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes and gravel pits. It nests in colonies with other piping plovers and sometimes with least terns. It is listed for Pottawattamie, and Woodbury Counties in Iowa and potential habitat can be found along the Missouri River in Fremont, Harrison, Kossuth, Lyon, Polk, Poweshiek, and Wapello Counties. No Critical Habitat has been designated. The birds must not be harmed, harassed or disturbed when present.

6. **The endangered pallid sturgeon** (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) is known from the Missouri River in Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Woodbury Counties and may potentially occur in Lyon, Plymouth, and Sioux Counties. Little is known of its habitat preferences; however, it is suspected that sand/gravel bars may be utilized for spawning.

7. **The endangered Higgins' eye pearly mussel** (*Lampsilis higginsii*) is listed for the Mississippi River north of Lock and Dam 20 which includes Allamakee, Clayton, Clinton, Des Moines, Dubuque, Jackson, Lee, Louisa, Muscatine, and Scott counties, Iowa. This species prefers sand/gravel substrates with a swift current and is most often found in-the main channel border or an open, flowing side channel.

While there is no designated critical habitat, the Higgins' eye Recovery Team has designated habitats essential to the recovery of the species. These areas include Allamakee County, Iowa (river miles 655.7-658.3R); Harper's Slough area, Allamakee County, Iowa (river mile 639.644R); Marquette-McGregor area, Clayton County, Iowa (river mile 633.3-637); McMillan Island area, Clayton County, Iowa (river mile 616.5-619R); Cordova, Rock Island County, Illinois (river mile 503-505.4L; and Sylvan Slough, Rock Island, Illinois (river mile 485.4486L). If a project is located near a known Higgins eye mussel bed, it may be necessary to conduct a survey to determine the presence of the species.

8. **The endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail** (*Discus macclintocki*) is found on north-facing slopes of the drift less area in Clayton, Clinton, Dubuque, Fayette, and Jackson Counties, Iowa. It occupies algific (cold producing) talus slopes at the outlet of underground ice caves along limestone bluffs within a narrow regime of soil moisture and temperature. There is no critical habitat designated. It must not be harmed, harassed or disturbed.

9. **The northern monkshood** (*Aconitum novaboracense*) is listed as threatened in Allamakee, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Jackson and Hardin Counties in Iowa. It occupies north-facing slopes in the drift less area of northeast Iowa and one slope along the Iowa River. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law.

10. **The prairie bush clover** (*Lespedeza leptostachya*) is listed as threatened in Butler, Clarke, Delaware, Dickinson, Emmet, Howard, Kossuth, Lucas, Osceola, Story, and Winneshiek counties in Iowa. It is also considered to potentially occur statewide in Iowa based on historical habitat. It occupies dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial

activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever prairie remnants are encountered.

11. **The Mead's milkweed** (*Asclepias meadii*) is listed as threatened in Adair, Clarke, Decatur, Ringgold, and Warren Counties, Iowa where it occupies virgin prairies. It may potentially occur in Lucas, Madison, Union and Wayne Counties, Iowa based on historical records and habitat distribution. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever prairie remnants are encountered.

12. **The eastern prairie fringed orchid** (*Platanthera leucophaea*) is listed as threatened for Decatur and Johnson Counties in Iowa. It may potentially occur in Appanoose, Cedar, Davis, Des Moines, Henry, Iowa, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lee, Louisa, Lucas, Monroe, Muscatine, Scott, Wapello, Washington, Wayne, and Van Buren counties, Iowa based on historical records and habitat distribution. It occupies wet grassland habitats. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever wet prairie remnants are encountered.

13. **The western prairie fringed orchid** (*Platanthera praeclara*) is listed as threatened for Adair, Bremer, Buena Vista, Cherokee, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Fayette, Guthrie, Howard, Kossuth, Mills, Pocahontas, and Taylor Counties in Iowa. It is considered to potentially occur statewide based on historical records and habitat distribution. It occupies wet grassland habitats. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever wet prairie remnants are encountered.

14. **Topeka Shiner** (*Notropis topeka*) to date, the shiner has been confirmed in 11 counties. It will likely be found in more. One interesting aspect that the sampling has revealed is that the shiner is not restricted to the main channels of streams as previously thought. Rather it has turned up in a number of off-channel habitats such as oxbows, cutoffs, and ponds. There may be a correlation between finding the shiner in these off-channel habitats and the discharge of groundwater into such areas via a sand/gravel lens. For a listing of streams the Topeka Shiner has currently been found in see the U.S. Fish & Wildlife service web site.